United Nations A/55/127

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 July 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 118 of the provisional agenda*
Review of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Procurement reform

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submited to the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 54/14 of 29 October 1999.

The report details the initiaives taken by the Secretariat in response to concerns expressed in the resolution. Most of these initiatives have been implemented and have already produced the desired results. These initiatives were mainly targeted at increasing transparency and evaluation objectivity in the bidding process, encouraging greater participaton by vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and increasing the cost-effectiveness of the Secretariat's procurement activties. The Secretary-General remains committed to ensuring that these positive developments in procurement reform are sustained and advanced.

For ease of reference, therelevant paragraphs of resolution 54/14 are in bold type below. The Secretary-General's responses follow. The section numbers and headings correspond to those set forth in resolution 54/14.

* A/55/150.

** The footnote requested by the Geneal Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

00-53271 (E) 100800

I. General comment

1. *Recognizes* the recent improvements made by the Secretary-General in procurement reform;

The Secretary-General wishes to express appreciation for the recognition by Member States of improvements in procurement reform.

2. *Notes with concern* that some of the provisions of its resolution 52/226 A have not been fully and adequately implemented, and requests the Secretary-General to complete the implementation of all outstanding provisions;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has taken various measures to implement the provisions set forth in resolution 52/226 A. Actions taken are summarized in the present report.

3. *Stresses* the need for the procurement system to be transparent, open, impartial and cost-effective, based on competitive bidding and fully reflecting the international character of the United Nations;

The Secretary-General wishes to share the views expressed by Member States and reaffirms his commitment to implement and sustain the procurement reform measures taken as outlined in the present report.

II. Procurement Manual

4. *Welcomes* the publication of the Procurement Manual, and requests the Secretary-General to update it, as appropriate, taking into account the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in paragraphs 99 to 104 of its report and including a step-by-step discussion of procedures required for field personnel to perform their duties;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that work on a revision of the Procurement Manual has begun. The revision will take into account the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, as set forth in paragraphs 99 to 104 of its report,[1] as well as all relevant comments on the subject by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee. The Secretariat has also finalized a simple step-by-step guideline of the procurement process on the Intranet.

III. General procurement process

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure that the bids received through electronic means are not compromised and to report on this in his next report on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that tender invitations are dispatched, and bids are received, only by mail or facsimile. Facsimile machines are located in a locked room with restricted access. Bids are not received through electronic mail.

6. *Endorses* the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions regarding the need to take steps to ensure that specifications are not deliberately tailored to predetermine the choice of supplier and that the principle of separation of responsibilities of the requisitioning and approving officers is maintained;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that, except for purchases of equipment and supplies on the basis of standardization (e.g., office furniture), only generic specifications are accepted from requisitioning offices. Strict enforcement of this requirement over the past year has led to a wider geographic distribution of vendors from whom the Secretariat makes purchases. The bid evaluation process has also been enhanced by the inclusion of established evaluation criteria in the bid documents.

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure wider participation of suppliers from all Member States, taking into account the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has taken a number of initiatives to encourage greater participation in United Nations procurement by vendors, especially those from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In this regard, the Procurement Division has initiated a more proactive effort to

organize and participate in business seminars and briefing sessions, distribute briefing materials in CD-ROM and video formats to Member States, United Nations information centres offices away from Headquarters and field missions, use the Internet for advertisement of local services and post detailed information on winners of contracts to facilitate communication between the United Nations contractors and local service providers. Details of these initiatives are further explained in response to paragraph 27 below.

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to improve further the competitive bidding process in order to ensure that vendors are granted reasonable time for the submission of bids;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has been actively using the Internet site to post requests for expression of interest to provide potential suppliers with advance information on future procurement opportunities. The Procurement Division has also undertaken regular meetings with requisitioning offices to review procurement plans and discuss upcoming requirements. Such activities also help the Procurement Division to reduce the number of tenders with a short lead time. However, the Secretary-General wishes to remind Member States that the Procurement Division cannot eliminate tenders with a short lead time, in particular for emergency requirements to support the peacekeeping missions.

9. *Welcomes* the increased use by the Secretary-General of modern electronic means of communication to disseminate information regarding requests for proposals, invitations to bid and requests for expression of interest, and requests him to continue to utilize traditional means of communication for such information upon request;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division posts information on tenders currently in the market and requests for expression of interest to encourage suppliers to register with the Procurement Division for future procurement opportunities. While the Internet is utilized as one method of communicating with the public, the Procurement Division also makes information available through traditional means. Simple-to-read and easily replicated printed brochures on "How to do business with the United Nations Procurement Division" have been produced in all the official languages and are freely distributed to the permanent missions to the United Nations and the general public. At the present time, tender documents are distributed only through traditional means of communication such as mail and facsimile.

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider ways to increase the transparency of procurement decisions, including the possibility of reviving the practice of the reading of prices and other decisive elements at public bid openings for requests for proposals, and to report thereon in his next report on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that all relevant procurement information, including the names and addresses of vendors awarded contracts and the value of each contract, is posted on a daily basis on the Procurement Division's Internet web site. The Secretariat has received feedback that the availability of comprehensive information on the Procurement Division's web site has made United Nations procurement activities one of the most transparent among international organizations. The Secretariat reads out price information from responses to invitations to bid at public openings. However, experience has shown that the reading out of price information for requests for proposals, where price is not the sole determinant, leads to unnecessary delays in the procurement process. Recent consultations have confirmed that this practice is consistent with that of other major procurement offices in the United Nations system.

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to enhance and expedite the procurement process and to improve communication with suppliers;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that dealings with vendors have been enhanced and facilitated through the increased use of expressions of interest and the posting of annual procurement plans on the Procurement Division's Internet web site. These public notifications provide not only advance information of requirements to registered vendors, but also serve to encourage new vendors with relevant products or services to seek registration. Instructions

have been issued to the staff of the Procurement Division requiring that all communications from suppliers be responded to within 72 hours.

IV. United Nations roster and common supplier database

12. *Notes* the efforts of the United Nations system to establish a common supplier database whereby participating organizations will be able to share information on suppliers, including evaluations of performance;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division uses information on suppliers in the United Nations Common Supplier Database (UNCSD) as reference. The Procurement Division will work with the UNCSD secretariat and the other organizations of the United Nations system to explore opportunities for further collaboration.

13. *Regrets* that the supplier roster is still not representative of the membership of the United Nations, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to intensify further and to focus his efforts to broaden the geographical base of the roster;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has taken a number of initiatives to encourage vendors from a broader geographical base to register as potential suppliers. A number of permanent missions to the United Nations are involved in some of these initiatives, including the organization of business seminars in their industrial capitals and the distribution of relevant literature and other materials to their business communities.

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to improve further the registration process for the supplier roster;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that vendor registration is now processed within two weeks of receipt, subject to the vendor providing all required documentation.

15. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to send invitations to tender, to the fullest extent possible, to all vendors registered under specific categories and services on the supplier roster;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the previous practice of short-listing candidates from the vendor roster to be invited to participate in the bidding process has been curtailed. Since April 1999, all registered vendors for the required product or service are given the opportunity to participate in the tender exercise. Exceptions are made only when the list of registered vendors is excessively numerous to permit a reasonable procurement process to take place. In such eventuality, a selection of invitees is made, a record kept of that selection, and subsequent invitations are thereafter issued on a rotational basis.

16. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of using the harmonized system of classification of goods for United Nations procurement and to report thereon in his next report on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that after careful review, the Secretariat has concluded that it is not feasible to utilize the harmonized system (HS) of classification of goods. Many classes of goods in HS are too generic to be of use under United Nations procurement methods. For instance, computers in HS are classified as word-processing machines or automatic data-processing machines while United Nations requirements are specific for laptop, notebook or desktop computers. Similar classification problems exist in the case of motor vehicles and other types of equipment.

V. Procurement planning

17. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to improve annual procurement planning for all offices and departments and to make such plans publicly available, including to all permanent missions to the United Nations;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that, as indicated above under paragraph 11, the annual procurement plans are posted on the Procurement Division's Internet web site.

VI. Exigency

18. *Notes with concern* the observations of the Advisory Committee that the definition of exigency as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General appears too broad to be of any real value in exercising the required control over the use of the exigency provision, and urges the Secretary-General to submit a sharper and clearer definition of exigency needs to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee, at its fifty-fourth session;

The Secretary-General notes that the General Assembly, in its decision 54/468, endorsed the revised definition of exigency. The revised definition has been reflected in the Procurement Manual as an amendment and the information was distributed within the Secretariat and to offices away from Headquarters, including the peacekeeping missions.

VII. Increasing procurement from developing countries

19. *Notes with appreciation* the acknowledgement by the Secretary-General of the need to increase procurement opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition and the steps taken in this regard, and requests him to enhance those efforts;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States of his commitment to take proactive measures to increase procurement opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Measures taken include business seminars scheduled to take place in 21 locations in those countries, distribution of procurement and vendor registration information in CD-ROM and video formats and more effective use of the Internet home page as described in the present report. A number of novel features have also been introduced in the Procurement Division web site, including a facility to permit vendors from those countries to post advertisements without cost.

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit in his next report on procurement reform detailed information on the awarding of contracts for procurement, at Headquarters and in the field, to developing countries, in particular least developed and African countries and countries with economies in transition;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the information on procurement in 1999 at Headquarters and in the field, broken down by country, was disseminated at the briefing session held for Member States on 10 March 2000. For a description of procurement in the field, the Procurement Division has sought assistance from the Field Administration and Logistics Division to allow the Procurement Division to have access to the information network of the missions.

21. (*a*) All invitations to tender should be posted on the Procurement Division web site as soon as they are prepared;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that tender information is posted on the Procurement Division web site as soon as it is prepared.

21. (*b*) All invitations to tender should be sent to all permanent missions to the United Nations, as well as to all United Nations information centres and other United Nations offices away from Headquarters for wider dissemination among Member States;

Tender invitations are sent to Member States, offices away from Headquarters and United Nations information centres by electronic mail as soon as tenders are issued.

21. (*c*) Procurement Division officials may undertake visits to developing countries and countries with economies in transition with a view to identifying potential vendors from those countries;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has initiated several meetings with regional groupings of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to discuss the creation of opportunities for meetings with their business communities. In 2000, arrangements have been made for the Procurement Division to visit 24 different locations for business seminars, with 21 of those locations being in developing countries or countries with economies in transition. The visits

include a briefing for delegations of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa.

22. *Notes with concern* the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 9 of its report that, out of the eleven countries visited by the procurement officials pursuant to paragraph 13 (c) of its resolution 52/226 A, only four were from the developing world and none were countries with economies in transition;

As stated in the preceding paragraph, the Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has arranged visits to 24 different locations for business seminars in 2000, with 21 of those locations being in developing countries or countries with economies in transition. The Secretariat was also instrumental in the selection of a developing country venue for the meeting in 2000 of the Inter-agency Procurement Working Group and the inclusion in the selection process for the venue in 2001 of a country whose economy is in transition.

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make all possible efforts to facilitate the identification of vendors in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including through the expeditious dissemination of information relating to procurement to those countries and the organization of seminars at the country and regional levels between the business community and United Nations offices in those countries;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division continually encourages the participation of suppliers from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, utilizing requests for expression of interest, the vendor registration programme and a new advertisement function in its Internet home page. The Procurement Division has also produced and distributed printed literature, CD-ROM and videos on doing business with the United Nations to Member States, United Nations information centres and offices away from Headquarters. Several meetings have been initiated with regional groupings of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to discuss the creation of opportunities for meetings with their business communities. In 2000, arrangements have been made for the Procurement Division to visit 24 different locations for business seminars, with 21 of those locations being in developing countries or countries with economies in transition. These proactive approaches are taken specifically for the purpose of identifying potential suppliers from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to provide them with opportunities to participate in United Nations procurement, including field procurement.

24. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to direct field offices to encourage interested local vendors to apply for registration on the Procurement Division vendor roster with a view to broadening its geographical base;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has taken various proactive measures, as explained under paragraphs 21 (c), 23 and 24 above and under paragraph 27 below.

25. *Encourages* the use of procurement within the region for the requirements of missions, taking into account efficiency and cost-effectiveness;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that local and regional procurement opportunities are a key message in the Procurement Division's briefing at business seminars. Host countries and local offices of United Nations entities are consistently encouraged to conduct local business meetings. In this connection, the Procurement Division's Internet home page and its brochure include a list of offices away from Headquarters, including missions. The Procurement Division has also developed a new feature in its home page where suppliers can place advertisements at no cost to facilitate United Nations offices in the region to identify potential suppliers. It has also added contact information of successful contractors to provide opportunities for local subcontract work or for the provision of local ancillary products and services.

VIII. Question of preferential treatment

26. *Reaffirms its request* to the Secretary-General to examine ways to increase opportunities for developing countries in the awarding of procurement contracts, in particular for least developed countries,

African countries and countries with economies in transition, taking into account the experience of preferential treatment in this regard in the funds and programmes of United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental institutions, and to report thereon to the General Assembly in his next report on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Secretariat has reviewed the practices and experiences of other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in terms of the preferential treatment of vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Only the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) practise some form of preferential treatment in their procurement activities. In an informal arrangement for low-value local purchases, UNESCO allows a 10 per cent price preference in favour of locally produced goods where local warranty is required. The Contracts Committee of UNHCR has the authority to extend preferential treatment to suppliers from developing countries and countries with economies in transition where this is found to benefit refugees or UNHCR activities to assist refugees. Price preference does not normally exceed 15 per cent over the international cost, insurance, freight (c.i.f.) price. The Secretariat was informed that neither organization maintains specific records on these preferential practices. It is noted that, in accordance with the financial rules, the awarding of contracts in the Secretariat is based on the lowest acceptable bid in order to ensure the best use of the Organization's resources. All valid bids, regardless of origin, are considered and evaluated for best offer without prejudice or preference.

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to explore ways to increase the procurement of goods and services from developing countries, in particular from least developed and African countries, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the Procurement Division has taken a number of initiatives to encourage greater participation in United Nations procurement by vendors, especially those from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. These initiatives include:

- A more proactive approach to, and participation in, business seminars taking place in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In addition, the Procurement Division has initiated several meetings with regional groupings of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to discuss the creation of opportunities for meetings with their business communities. In 2000, arrangements have been made for the Procurement Division to visit 24 different locations for business seminars, with 21 of those locations being in developing countries or countries with economies in transition. The visits include a briefing for delegations of ECA;

- The holding of several procurement briefing sessions for Member States and trade missions, including one in which the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund participated;

- United Nations procurement briefing material in CD-ROM and video formats were produced and distributed to Member States, field missions, United Nations information centres and offices away from Headquarters in order to access business communities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition that do not have ready access to the Internet;

- Simple-to-read and replicate printed literature in all the official languages on how to do business with the United Nations have been produced and freely distributed to the permanent missions to the United Nations and the general public;

- A novel feature was introduced on the Procurement Division's Internet web site that permits vendors exclusively from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to advertise their products and services without cost. This facility is designed to promote greater local and regional participation by those vendors in United Nations procurement;

- Circulars were issued to United Nations information centres and offices away from Headquarters requesting that they encourage local

vendors to register on the United Nations vendor roster;

- Contact information (e.g., contact person and telephone number) of contract awardees and destination details are currently provided on the Procurement Division's Internet web site to facilitate opportunities for the provision of local ancillary products and services or for subcontract work.

28. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on due attention paid to offers for procurement submitted by vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, without prejudice to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and taking into account the provisions of the present resolution;

As explained in the response to paragraph 26 above, the Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that all offers are considered and evaluated, without prejudice or preference, to determine the best offer on the basis of cost efficiency regardless of origin.

IX. Regulations and rules

29. *Reiterates the request* contained in paragraph 4 of its resolution 52/226 A;[2]

The Secretary General wishes to inform Member States that a draft revision of the financial rules relating to procurement has been completed and submitted for internal review and approval within the Department of Management. A revision of the financial rules relating to procurement is expected to be issued before the end of 2000.

30. *Regrets* that the request contained in paragraph 28 of its resolution 52/226 A for the submission of proposals on possible amendments to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, in order to address issues of potential conflict of interest, has not been fulfilled, and requests the Secretary-General to submit the proposals as a matter of priority, but not later than the end of its fifty-fourth session;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that this issue is being reviewed by the Office of Human Resources Management and will be discussed by the Management Policy Committee. Member States will be informed of the progress made.

31. *Looks forward* to the submission of the text of the additional rules requested in paragraph 10 of its resolution 52/252, as a matter of priority, but not later than the end of its fifty-fourth session;

The Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that the issue is being reviewed by the Office of Human Resources Management and will be discussed by the Management Policy Committee. Member States will be informed of the progress made.

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make proposals for improving the system of payment to suppliers, including possible mechanisms similar to letters of credit;

With regard to letters of credit, the Secretary-General wishes to inform Member States that, after in-depth review, the Secretariat is of the opinion that they would not serve the interests of the Organization for the following reasons:

- Letters of credit are mainly utilized in commercial transactions where the credit-worthiness of the buyer is not assured. The integrity of the United Nations in this respect is secure;
- Letters of credit are not normally used by Governments and public institutions;
- Letters of credit are costly to issue;
- Payments under letters of credit are effected by banks against receipt of documents; this would not permit verification of the transaction by the United Nations;
- The procurement activities of the Secretariat have so far been conducted satisfactorily without the use of letters of credit.

As to the system of payment to suppliers, the Secretary-General notes that delay in payment to suppliers may sometimes be caused by incomplete documentation provided by suppliers or difficulty in matching suppliers' invoices with United Nations documents owing to short or partial shipment or problems associated with the format of invoices. Payment is processed in accordance with the Financial

Regulations and Rules as well as contractual terms and conditions. While payment terms are agreed on in each contract under the framework of the Financial Regulations and Rules and taking specific circumstances into consideration, the Procurement Division is ready to assist the Accounts Division and the requisitioning offices should problems related to payment arise.

X. Performance measurement

33. *Requests* the Secretary-General to develop a comprehensive system to measure the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the procurement function, by taking into account the best practices of other organizations of the United Nations system in his next report on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General notes that, at the present time, there is no mechanism or methodology to measure the performance of the procurement function within the United Nations system. Consultants employed by the Secretariat, in conjunction with the Common Services Working Group, began reviewing this issue in March 2000. Their review is expected to be completed by September 2000.

XI. Reports of the Board of Auditors

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement fully the provisions of paragraphs 3 and 4 of its resolution 52/212 B regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors;

The Secretary-General notes that he has fully implemented the provisions of paragraphs 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 52/212 B.

35. *Reiterates the request* contained in paragraph 6 of its resolution 53/204 addressed to the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the United Nations funds and programmes to ensure timely implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors as approved in that resolution;

The Secretary-General notes that the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors by the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the United Nations funds and programmes has been reported in full detail by the Board of Auditors in its report (A/54/159 and Corr.1). It is also noted that reports on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors are submitted to the General Assembly on an annual basis in accordance with the reporting arrangements endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/212 B.

XII. Format for reports

36. *Requests* the Secretary-General to develop a standard format for future reports on procurement reform;

The Secretary-General has taken note of this requirement and has taken the steps necessary to ensure that reports are prepared in the desired format.

37. *Emphasizes* that the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on procurement reform should be submitted in accordance with paragraphs 24 and 25 of its resolution 52/214 B and paragraphs 10 to 12 of its resolution 53/208 B;

The Secretary-General has taken note of this requirement and has taken the steps necessary to ensure that reports are prepared in the desired format.

XIII. Method of determining the basis of statistical reports

38. *Endorses* the observations of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of its report, and requests the Secretary-General to indicate on what basis the country of procurement is determined and how this methodology compares with recognized international practice.

The Secretary-General notes that the manner in which the Secretariat compiles procurement statistics is consistent with the accepted methodology within the United Nations system. The same methodology is also used in the compilation of United Nations-wide statistics by the United Nations Development Programme in its annual statistical report.

With the expanded globalization of commerce, the issue of country of origin for manufactured goods has become more complicated. In 1995, under its harmonization work programme, the World Trade Organization (WTO) requested its Committee on Rules of Origin to propose a common architecture for harmonized rules of origin.[3] The Committee was initially expected to present its proposals by 1998 but has yet to do so. A universally accepted standard has not yet been established. The Secretariat will continue to monitor the work of WTO in this area in order to establish a more suitable alternative to the present methodology.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 5* and corrigendum (A/53/5 and Corr.1), vol. I.

[2] Paragraph 4 of resolution 52/226 A reads as follows: Also notes the delay in submission of proposals for revision of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, which may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of the procurement reform process, and requests the Secretary-General to submit such proposals to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for consideration by the Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-second session.

[3] See World Trade Organization documents G/RO/25 and G/RO/38.

United Nations A/55/128

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 75(g) of the provisional agenda*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 53/78 E of 1998, by which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the General Assembly on the disarmament information programme for the period July 1998 to June 2000.

The report outlines the resources and activities that the Department for Disarmament Affairs has developed to carry out a reinvigorated outreach programme in its substantive priority areas of:

(a) Weapons of mass destruction;

(b) Conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons.

In implementing its programme, the Department has increasingly exploited the electronic medium. It has developed an extensive web site and used sophisticated desktop publishing software to make information available to a wide spectrum of users.

In keeping with the Secretary-General's policy of strengthening ties with civil society, the disarmament information programme has intensified its interaction with non-governmental organizations and research institutes.

* A/55/150.

** The report was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/78 E by which the Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session the activities of the Programme during the previous two years (from July 1998 to June 2000) and the activities of the Programme contemplated by the system for the following two years.

00-53279 (E) 100800

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–4	3
	A. Priorities	2	3
	B. Impact of electronic technology	3	3
	C. Civil society	4	3
II.	Information and education resources	5–14	3
	A. Publications since July 1998	5–7	3
	B. Web site	8–10	4
	C. Exhibits	11–14	5
III.	Information and education activities	15–21	5
	A. Symposia	15	5
	B. Messenger of peace activities	16	6
	C. Liaison with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research	17–18	7
	D. Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters: discussion on education	19	8
	E. International Association of University Presidents	20	8
	F. Briefings	21	8
IV.	Cooperation with civil society	22–26	8
	A. Collaboration in activities of non-governmental organizations	23	8
	B. Representation at meetings of non-governmental organizations	24–25	9
	C. Facilitating participation of non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental meetings	26	9
V.	Regional activities	27	9
VI.	Training	28–30	9
	A. United Nations Fellowship Programme	28	9
	B. Internships in the Department	29	9
	C. Cooperative monitoring workshops	30	10
VII.	Activities of the Department of Public Information	31–39	10
	A. Radio	32	10
	B. Television	33	10
	C. Printed materials	34–35	11
	D. Non-governmental organizations	36	11
	E. Public affairs	37	11
	F. United Nations Information Centres	38	11
	G. Other activities	39	11

I. Introduction

1. By resolution 53/78 E, adopted without a vote on 4 December 1998, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session a report covering both the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The programme, which is administered principally by the Monitoring, Database and Information Branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, was strengthened by the recruitment in 1999 of a new Political Affairs Officer at the P-3 level. An addendum will be issued to the present report providing information regarding the status of the Voluntary Trust Fund.

A. Priorities

2. The information programme reflects the priorities of the work programme of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. Thus, a continuing priority is the area of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. The following sections indicate how the programme has addressed this concern through publications, symposia, exhibits and other activities, especially in connection with the preparatory process for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Conference itself. The Secretary-General's proposal to convene a major international conference that would help to identify ways to eliminate nuclear dangers, made in his report to the Millennium Assembly (A/54/2000), may also give impetus to this trend. Another priority area is that of conventional weapons, the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons and the disarmament-development perspective. These concerns are also evident in the work described below and will certainly have an impact on the future programme, given the fact that the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is scheduled for mid-2001, and the Secretary-General has recently established a high-level steering group on disarmament and development.

B. Impact of electronic technology

3. As foreseen in the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme (A/53/161 and Add.1 and Corr.1), technology has had a major impact. Small, non-sales publications are immediately made available electronically on the Department's web site, once they have received clearance, while their availability in hard copy may take several months. Sophisticated desktop publishing software has permitted the Department to design the covers of such publications, thereby saving considerable time and money.

C. Civil society

4. In keeping with the Secretary-General's desire to strengthen the United Nations ties with civil society, the programme has intensified its interaction with various segments of the public, principally non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes, over the past two years, as described below. The areas of the Department's work that have generated the most interest among specialized NGOs and institutes are nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and small arms and light weapons; thus, the high level of interaction can be expected to be maintained as the results of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are closely reviewed and preparations are made for the 2001 conference on small arms.

II. Information and education resources

A. Publications since July 1998

5. The Department has expanded the volume of its publications output since the previous report. As mentioned above, it has made use of its web site to speed up publication of some material. In view of the fact that it does not have the human resources necessary to typeset all potential publications, it has, on occasion, shared publication of symposium presentations with the organization with which it collaborated in mounting the symposium. Lack of resources within the Department has hampered the timely distribution of publications, and lack of

resources in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services has seriously delayed the reproduction of some publications.

6 The publications listed below have been produced since July 1998. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are posted on the Department's web site.

(a) *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 23 (1998) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.1) and vol. 24 (1999) (United Nations publication, sales No. E.00.IX.1); forthcoming in all languages;

(b) *Study Series: Small Arms*, Number: 28 (1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.7); forthcoming in all languages;

(c) *Occasional papers*:

(i) *Towards a world free from nuclear weapons: Why South Africa gave up the nuclear option/Vers un monde exempt d'armes nucléaires: pourquoi l'Afrique du Sud a abandonné l'option nucléaire*, Number: 1 (July 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.4/F.99.IX.4);

(ii) *Missile development and its impact on global security*, Number: 2 (September 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.8); French forthcoming;

(iii) *Symposium on nuclear doctrines*, Number: 3 (December 1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.IX.2); French forthcoming;

(d) **DDA Update*, October 1998; June, September, December 1999; March 2000;

(e) **Disarmament Resolutions and Decisions of the United Nations General Assembly*, fifty-third session, fifty-fourth session;

(f) *Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Quarterly Newsletter, Oct-Dec 1999*, Number 24;

(g) *Forging Security and Development Initiatives*, a brochure of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC);

(h) *Ad hoc publications*:

(i) *Workshop on Weapons Collection and Integration of Former Combatants into Civil Society/Seminario Taller sobre recolección de armas e integración de excombatientes en la sociedad civil* (1999) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.6/S.99.IX.6);

(ii) **2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — 24 April-19 May, New York* (United Nations publication, 00-27462); French forthcoming;

(iii) **2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — 24 April-19 May, New York/ Conférence d'examen des parties au Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires — 24 avril-19 mai 2000 — New York* (2000) (DPI/2085) (drafted and typeset in the Department for Disarmament Affairs).

7. The following publications were also issued in the reporting period, in cooperation with the NGO Committee on Disarmament:

(a) *1998: The Future of Disarmament* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.2), English only;

(b) *1999: The World at a Critical Turning Point* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.5), English only.

B. Web site

8. In order to coordinate and consolidate United Nations web resources related to disarmament and international security issues, the web site of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, first established in 1996, has been incorporated into the "United Nations and Disarmament" web site. This site now includes a set of electronic links, such as: Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee);[1] Disarmament Commission (UNDC);[2] Conference on Disarmament (CD);[3] Department for Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA);[4] and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).[5]

9. The web site provides access to the individual web sites of all five Branches of the Department: CD Secretariat and Conference Support (Geneva); Weapons of Mass Destruction; Conventional Arms (including Practical Disarmament Measures); Monitoring, Database and Information; and Regional Disarmament. Among other useful electronic resources

is a series of regularly updated materials: relevant statements by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General; statements by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; relevant press releases; and databases on disarmament resolutions and decisions, on the status of multilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements, and on reports submitted under article 7 by the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

10. In view of the growing necessity to achieve multilingual parity, the Department for Disarmament Affairs has posted a number of documents in several of the official languages of the United Nations. However, the further multilingual development, coordination, production and management of information content on the web site cannot be sustained without a substantial increase in the level of investment in information technology and human resources.

C. Exhibits

11. As part of the observance of United Nations Day in 1998 at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Geneva Branch organized a display of publications and other information materials produced by the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

12. The exhibit entitled *The United Nations and Nuclear Disarmament: Achievements on the Way to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*, produced by several NGOs and co-sponsored by the Department in the framework of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme, travelled to Geneva and Vienna in 1998. Plans are being made for it to be displayed in other places as well.

13. In 1999, the Department and UNICEF collaborated in the production and display of a travelling exhibit entitled *Taking Aim at Small Arms: Defending Children's Rights*, with the financial support of the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Andorra to the United Nations. The purpose of the exhibit was to highlight the dramatic impact on women and children of the excessive availability of small arms as well as the activities through which the United Nations attempts to address the problem, and to promote further governmental and public remedial action. The exhibit opened at United Nations Headquarters on 15 July at an official ceremony that featured the Deputy Secretary-General and world-renowned film actor and producer Michael Douglas as Messenger of Peace. It was then displayed at UNICEF House in New York. Subsequently, it travelled to The Hague, Andorra and Lomé, and demand for bookings continues.

14. In February 2000, the Under-Secretaries-General of the Department of Public Information and the Department for Disarmament Affairs began the process of refurbishing the permanent disarmament exhibit segment of the official guided tour for public visitors to the Organization. The revamping is expected to be completed and the exhibit inaugurated on 23 October 2000. The exhibit will extend the message to the public that the United Nations has important roles to play not only in the field of nuclear disarmament and other weapons of mass destruction, but also in the field of conventional weapons, small arms and landmines.

III. Information and education activities

A. Symposia

15. In 1998, the Department initiated a series of discussions on topics of interest in the field of arms limitation and disarmament (see chart below) with a view to broadening understanding and facilitating a meaningful discussion of the issues among Member States and civil society. In most instances, the presentations made at the symposia were or are being developed into publications and placed on the Department's web site in order to extend their outreach.

26 October 1998	*Symposium on De-Alerting of Nuclear Weapons.* The first symposium was launched with a panel of four experts.
22 April 1999	*Symposium on Missile Development and Its Impact on Global Security.* Experts from five regions addressed different aspects of the issue. (See Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Papers, Number 2.)

20 July 1999	*Symposium on Disarmament and Development*, held in collaboration with the Departments of Economic and Social Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Economists Allied for Arms Reduction (ECAAR). It was the first event of this kind to be held under the aegis of the newly established high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development. (The presentations have been published in *ECAAR Papers: United Nations Symposium on Disarmament and Development*, ECAAR, 2000.)
18 October 1999	*Symposium on Nuclear Doctrines.* Following a suggestion by the representative of the Solomon Islands during the First Committee at the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, a panel of four international scholars spoke on the subject (see Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Papers, Number 3).
24 March 2000	*Symposium on Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention: International Cooperation and Exchanges in the Field of Biotechnology.* In partnership with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) and the Department, the symposium commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Biological Weapons Convention. It was coordinated with a similar event organized in Geneva by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). (A Department for Disarmament Affairs Occasional Paper will be published and be posted on the Department's web site.)
1 May 2000	*Arms Control and Disarmament: A New Conceptual Approach.* The Department, together with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), sponsored a panel discussion. Speakers included six expert panellists. (Joint publication to be edited by SIPRI and produced by DDA)
21 June 2000	*Restructuring of the Global Arms Industry and Its Implications.* Second in the series under the auspices of the Steering Group on Disarmament and Development, the Department organized, with ECAAR and the World Policy Institute, a panel dialogue. Five expert panellists participated. (Presentations to be published by ECAAR)

B. Messenger of peace activities

16. On 30 July 1998, Michael Douglas was appointed as a Messenger of Peace by the Secretary-General. It was announced that he would focus on two issues: disarmament and human rights, concentrating on the right to human security. In addition to his official activities as Messenger of Peace, set out in the chart below, Mr. Douglas uses the opportunities of interviews with the press to inject messages about nuclear disarmament and small arms control.

27 June 1998 (just prior to appointment)	Vienna	Participated in United Nations commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by reciting the Preamble of the 1948 Universal Declaration at a Human Rights Assembly. Delivered a short speech on the right to human security at a panel discussion which called upon the world to unite to "make nuclear weapons a horror of the past".
25 September 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	Gave keynote address to *Seminar on Initiatives to Stop the Spread and Unlawful Use of Small Arms*, sponsored by the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), calling for responsible ownership of guns to protect children and more governmental control to prevent criminal use, including barrel marking. "Wherever arms flow, violence follows. Bullets replace ballots as the solution to political disputes." Highlighted many of the efforts the

		United Nations is making and called for all countries to follow that lead.
30 October 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	Addressed the *Women's International Forum*, calling for ridding the world of nuclear weapons and for greater curbs on the flows of small arms in order to protect the civilian population.
10 December 1998	United Nations Head-quarters	In commemorating Human Rights Day, Mr. Douglas, with two other Messengers of Peace, Ms. Anna Cataldi and Mr. Luciano Pavarotti, joined the Secretary-General to present the *Children's Human Rights Passports*. Mr. Douglas highlighted the right of all children to security and development.
20 July 1999	United Nations Head-quarters	With the Deputy Secretary-General and the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, the Ambassador of Andorra to the United Nations and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, launched the Department for Disarmament Affairs/UNICEF travelling exhibit entitled *Taking Aim at Small Arms: Defending Children's Rights*. Spoke as an American concerned about gun violence in the United States and in conflicts around the world. Stressed that "whether children are killed or they did the killing, still they are the victims."
10 and 11 October 1999	Gramsh, Albania	At the Department's request, visited Department for Disarmament Affairs/UNDP Pilot Project to observe a demonstration of the destruction of weapons collected and community development projects given in exchange. Visited region of Elbasan to encourage citizens to extend project to region. Public events in Tirana drew the attention of the national and international community to the need to fund projects.
20 March 2000	London	Visit to All Party Committee on Non-Proliferation and Global Security at House of Commons, called for the help of members of Parliament for further reductions in nuclear weapons. Met with Mr. Robin Cook, Foreign Secretary and Mr. Peter Hain, Foreign Commonwealth Office Affairs Minister, urging United Kingdom intercession with the United States and the Russian Federation to reactivate the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) process.

It is expected that the Messenger of Peace will play a very important role in the lead-up to the 2001 conference as the Department seeks to keep the public informed of small arms issues.

C. Liaison with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

17. UNIDIR works in close relationship with the Department for Disarmament Affairs pursuant to article 1 of the Statute of the Institute.[6] The Department is responsible for the selection of the Institute's Board of Trustees and organizes its meetings. (The members of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters serve as the Board of Trustees of the Institute.) The Statute also requires UNIDIR to consult with the Department on budgetary matters. In addition, the Department assists the Institute in the preparation of the two reports that it is required to submit to the General Assembly.

18. The Department coordinates its outreach activities with UNIDIR, especially in regard to publications and symposia. On 25 and 26 August 1999, the Department and UNIDIR partnered in Geneva an international meeting of experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. The symposium was held partly in response to General Assembly resolution 53/70 on the same subject, introduced in 1998 by the Russian Federation and adopted without a vote. Sixty-eight governmental and non-governmental experts from 40 States attended the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to raise awareness among Member States of the

possible negative potential of such technologies and to initiate multilateral discussions.

D. Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters: discussion on education

19. At its January/February 2000 session, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters discussed the topic of education for disarmament and non-proliferation. Faced with the complacency of Governments and the public about the dangers still facing the global community, particularly from nuclear weapons, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General consider the possibility of conducting a study on disarmament education. At its July session, the Board put forward a draft mandate that would cover primary grades through specialized post-graduate levels, and incorporate the latest in long-distance learning techniques. In order to give a strong voice to the NGO/education and non-proliferation community, the Board invited the director of the Peace Education Campaign of the Hague Appeal for Peace (an NGO) and the Chairman of the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP)/ Commission for Disarmament Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace to address it on the issue.

E. International Association of University Presidents

20. The Department continued its support and participated in meetings held by the IAUP/Commission for Disarmament Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace.

F. Briefings

21. At the request of the Public Inquiries Unit of the Department of Public Information, staff of the Department undertook approximately 30 briefing engagements per year for the benefit of:

(a) Student visitors in the framework of university programmes dealing with the United Nations;

(b) United Nations Association members from various countries;

(c) Students preparing for the Model United Nations exercises;

(d) Visiting members of NGOs.

IV. Cooperation with civil society

22. The Department carried out the activities described below. In addition, it maintained close contact on an ongoing basis with a number of major NGO coalitions, among them Abolition 2000 and Reaching Critical Will, and research institutes, and followed the proceedings of the Millennium Forum, held from 22 to 26 May 1999.

A. Collaboration in activities of non-governmental organizations

23. The Department cooperated with the NGO Committee on Disarmament[7] and the Department of Public Information in conducting a number of panel discussions in the fall of 1998 and 1999 during Disarmament Week, and in the spring of 1999 during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and during the session of the Disarmament Commission. Discussions covered a wide range of topics. Issues related to weapons of mass destruction — especially nuclear weapons — were the focus of many of the panel presentations, among which were the New Agenda Coalition, the Tokyo Forum report, implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, de-alerting, and technical and political aspects of depleted uranium weaponry. Several discussions focused on a new NGO initiative, Global Action to Prevent War, which extended its reach to the 9,000 people attending the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in May 1999. Humanitarian and development concerns figured in discussions on the implications of small arms proliferation, regional initiatives in Latin America and Africa and the relationship between disarmament and development. The Department facilitated the publication of material arising from the joint events with the NGO Committee on Disarmament.[8] Edited transcripts of discussions are available on http://www.igc.org/disarm/forum.html.

B. Representation at meetings of non-governmental organizations

24. At a meeting convened by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in Dublin, Ireland, from 15 to 18 September 1998 to prepare for the production of *Landmine Monitor Report 1999*, a representative of the Department made a presentation on the role of the United Nations in assisting States parties to the Mine-Ban Convention with regard to reporting on their transparency measures under article 7 of the Convention.

25. The Department was represented at the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference, held in The Hague from 11 to 16 May 1999. At the invitation of the organizers, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, who was unable to attend, videotaped a statement entitled "Civil society and the verification of disarmament", which was shown at a workshop. The Department's representative at the Conference moderated a panel discussion on the challenges to disarmament in the twenty-first century.

C. Facilitating participation of non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental meetings

26. In collaboration with States parties, the Department facilitated NGO participation in the 1998 and 1999 sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the 2000 Review Conference and the Conference itself, implementing a decision of the Committee to make time available at each session of the Committee and at the Conference for NGO representatives to address delegations. This represented a considerable advance over the 1995 Review Conference, at which NGOs had been permitted only to attend open meetings. A decision on the modalities for NGO participation in the preparatory process for the 2001 United Nations Conference on illicit trade in small arms is still pending.

V. Regional activities

27. In a series of resolutions adopted at its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly reaffirmed the usefulness of the Department's three regional centres — for Africa, for Asia and the Pacific, and for Latin America and the Caribbean — in carrying out dissemination and educational programmes. The Department has worked through its regional centres in a variety of ways to promote dialogue and confidence-building in their respective regions.[9]

VI. Training

A. United Nations Fellowship Programme

28. As mandated by the General Assembly, the Department continued to implement the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme. The programme, designed to promote expertise in disarmament in more Member States, particularly developing countries, trained 50 diplomats in the period covered (for details, see A/55/152).

B. Internships in the Department

29. In both New York and Geneva, the Department hosted and trained graduate students serving in different internship programmes at the United Nations (see chart below). The interns were distributed among the different Branches of the Department according to their interests and the needs of the Department. Their assignments included: assisting in the organization and reporting on disarmament-related bodies, preparing background notes and bibliographies on subjects of topical interest, summarizing academic journals, and organizing and advertising symposia and panels.

United Nations Graduate Internship Programme	4-6 full-time interns	period of 2-3 months	3 times a year
Monterey Institute of International Studies/ Centre for Non-proliferation Studies	one full-time intern/New York	duration of 6 months	twice yearly
	one full-time intern/Geneva	duration of 8 months	once a year
Fordham University, New York	1 part-time intern	duration 2-3 months	once a year

Nova Southeastern Law School, Florida	one (or two) full-time intern(s)	duration 2-3 months	twice yearly
Columbia Univ./ School of International and Public Affairs, NY	two full-time interns	duration 2 months	once a year
Armenian General Benevolent Union, NY	one full-time intern	duration 2 months	once a year

C. Cooperative monitoring workshops

30. In collaboration with the Cooperative Monitoring Center of the Sandia National Laboratories of the United States Department of Energy, the Department for Disarmament Affairs sponsored four workshops on cooperative monitoring for arms control, disarmament and other cooperative security measures over two days at Headquarters (9 and 10 February 2000). The workshops consisted of a portable demonstration of cooperative monitoring technologies. The 60 participants included United Nations staff from several departments (the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC)), diplomats, members of the press and NGOs. Plans are under way to sponsor the workshops in Geneva for the benefit of representatives to the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the staff of the Geneva Branch and UNIDIR, members of the press and NGOs early in 2001.

VII. Activities of the Department of Public Information

31. In accordance with its mandate and in cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Public Information continued to publicize United Nations activities in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

A. Radio

32. The Department of Public Information provided extensive coverage on various aspects of disarmament and related issues in its news bulletins and current affairs magazines in 15 languages. Its radio news programmes carried reports on the work of disarmament bodies — the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee, the preparatory process leading up to the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Conference itself, and the activities of the parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. They covered a range of issues: nuclear matters, the impact of light weapons and small arms on socio-economic development and United Nations efforts in demining. In addition to news bulletins and current affairs programmes, the Department produced 30 newsmagazines and 14 feature programmes in both official and non-official languages for regional and worldwide dissemination.

B. Television

33. Disarmament issues were featured in a range of the Department of Public Information's video products: *UN in Action*, the ongoing series of newsmagazines distributed to more than 100 countries, and *World Chronicle*, the United Nations television discussion programme, which included interviews with the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretary-General of the 2000 Review Conference. In addition, the Department of Public Information, working closely with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, finalized the production of a documentary on illicit transfers of small arms. Entitled *Armed to the Teeth*, the documentary has been produced in English in a 28-minute version for the public, including schools and other educational institutions, and a 55-minute version for television broadcast. Other language versions will be produced later in 2000. The documentary is expected to contribute significantly to the promotional campaign to raise awareness of small arms issues prior to the 2001 conference. By the end of the year, it will be available in French and Spanish as well as English.

C. Printed materials

34. The Department of Public Information carried out extensive press coverage on disarmament topics, issuing almost 200 press releases in English and over 150 in French, as well as background notes, on many of the activities recorded in the earlier sections of the present report. In addition to press materials, the Department promoted awareness of disarmament through its regular publications: the *UN Chronicle* and the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the two booklets "UN in brief" and "Image and reality", and the reference paper "United Nations conferences and observances". *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, which is currently being updated, also contains an extensive section covering the full range of disarmament issues and the role of the United Nations in this field. The UN News Service on the Internet, produced by the Department, has also provided regular news reports on disarmament meetings and issues.

35. In cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the Department of Public Information produced a brochure on the Treaty in English, French and Spanish, with financial support from the Government of Finland. In cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Public Information has been involved in the production of publications on landmines.

D. Non-governmental organizations

36. Disarmament issues were also highlighted at the weekly briefings to NGOs, organized by the Department of Public Information at United Nations Headquarters, on such topics as: the campaign against the illicit arms trade, implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and Global Action to Prevent War. In September 2000, the Department of Public Information/NGO Annual Conference will give special attention to the issue of small arms trafficking.

E. Public inquiries

37. The Department of Public Information, through its Public Inquiries Unit, responded to 832 inquiries on disarmament-related issues. In addition, the Unit's new publication, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the UN", introduced disarmament and related issues to high school students. The Group Programmes and Community Liaison Unit arranged 40 briefings on the subject of disarmament that were attended by over 2,100 participants, and the disarmament exhibit, a feature of the guided tour route, was attended by nearly 900,000 visitors during the reporting period. As mentioned above, the exhibit is being refurbished in close collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

F. United Nations Information Centres

38. The 78 United Nations Information Centres, services and offices produced or translated and disseminated information material and documents related to disarmament. They replicated the Department's information programmes and launched their own initiatives, usually in cooperation with local NGOs, academic institutions or the media. They also played an important but often overlooked part in organizing or supporting local, regional and international meetings and events on disarmament, such as the International Conference on Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development, held in Brussels on 12 and 13 October 1998, meetings of the United Nations regional centres, and meetings on landmine issues in Cairo, Tokyo, Washington and Tunis.

G. Other activities

39. The Department of Public Information organized two programmes to familiarize the press with disarmament subjects: briefings for the United States National Conference of Editorial Writers and for African journalists. These programmes brought prominent journalists and the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs together, thereby providing an opportunity to disseminate information on disarmament and to listen to the concerns of writers of leading newspapers.

Notes

[1] Go to http://www.un.org/ga/, then follow the link to the First Committee.

[2] http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/UNDC/UNDC.htm.

[3] http://www.unog.ch/disarm/dconf.htm.

[4] http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/DDAHome.htm.

[5] http://www.unog.ch/UNIDIR/.

[6] General Assembly resolution 39/148 H, annex.

[7] The Internet address is http://www.igc.org/disarm.

[8] *The World at a Critical Turning Point*, New York, 1999 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IX.5).

[9] In this connection, see the following reports of each of the regional centres: A/54/332 and Add.1 and A/55/171 (Africa), A/54/255 and Add.1 (Asia and the Pacific), and A/54/310 and Add.1 and A/55/169 (Latin America and the Caribbean).

United Nations A/55/128/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 August 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 75 (g) of the provisional agenda*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General**

Addendum

1. The information and outreach activities of the Department for Disarmament Affairs are supported by the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme. The available balance that remained in the Fund as of 31 December 1999 amounted to $487,012. The status of the Fund as of 31 December 1999 is described in the annex to the present document.

2. Information activities continue to benefit from the generosity of Member States. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is grateful for all donations and suggestions for particular projects. During the period from January 1998 to December 1999, the United Nations received a total of $92,773 in contributions from the following States: Finland, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Sweden. During the period 1 January to 30 June 2000, additional contributions of $14,532 have been received from Finland, Greece and the Republic of Korea.

* A/55/150.
** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

00-58480 (E) 210800

Annex

Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme for the period 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999

	(United States dollars)
I. Fund balance as of 31 December 1997	461 907
II. Income	
1 January 1998-31 December 1999	
Voluntary contributions	92 778
Interest income	49 651
Miscellaneous/other income	38 332
Subtotal	**180 761**
III. Expenditures	
1 January 1998-31 December 1999	114 513
Prior period adjustments	41 143
Subtotal	**155 656**
IV. Fund balance	**487 012**

Note: This information is based on the financial statement for the biennium 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999.

United Nations A/55/129

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2000
English
Original: English/Russian/Spanish

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (t) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament: observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General**

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Replies received from Governments	2
	A. Cuba	2
	B. Russian Federation	3

* A/55/150.

** The report contains replies from Member States and its preparation depends upon receipt of such replies.

00-53287 (E) 250700 010800

I. Introduction

1. On 1 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 S, entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control", operative paragraph 4 of which reads as follows:

> "4. *Invites* all Member States to communicate to the Secretary-General information on the measures they have adopted to promote the objectives envisaged in the present resolution, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report containing this information to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session."

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, on 14 March 2000, addressed a note verbale to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in chapter II below. Any other replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

A. Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[19 June 2000]

3. Concern for the environment occupies an increasingly important rank among the priorities of numerous States, international organizations, non-governmental bodies and individuals. This concern has to do not only with the possibility of serious accidents or the management of radioactive waste, but also with the implementation and preparation of disarmament and arms control agreements.

4. Cuba provides for environmental conservation and protection in its economic and social development plan, including specific provisions that no military exercise, manoeuvre or other activity of that nature may affect the natural environment. This concern has also been reflected in all forums relating to the issue, especially in the preparation over several years of a draft resolution by which the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries expresses its concerns and undertakings in this area.

5. Through the aforesaid draft resolution, the non-aligned countries reaffirm their conviction that the international disarmament forums should take the relevant environmental protection norms into account in the preparation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements and treaties, and they call upon States to adopt unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures which will help to ensure that the use of scientific and technological progress is not detrimental to the environment.

6. It is widely recognized that scientific and technological progress not only opens up the possibility of influencing the natural environment in beneficial ways (for example, through cloud seeding, preventing hailstorms, dispersing mists and neutralizing the destructive force of hurricanes and typhoons), but also facilitates the military use of environmental modification techniques.

7. The concerns of the international community in this regard were reflected in the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

8. In accordance with the basic provisions contained in this legal instrument, each State party undertakes not to engage in military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques having widespread, long-lasting or severe effects as the means of destruction, damage or injury to any other State party.

9. The progress achieved in biotechnology has been accompanied by concerns as to the possible risks and deliberate abuse of this discipline. One of the principal effects of biotechnology has been seen in applied basic biological research. Most of this knowledge has practical consequences for health care, agriculture and environmental protection.

10. The ecological risks caused by the release into the environment of organisms modified through genetic engineering, genetic manipulation and the production of human clones, and the development of biological and toxic weapons are among the concerns now being aroused by biotechnology.

11. The manufacture, storage and acquisition of biological weapons for hostile uses or use in armed conflicts has been banned by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and

Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, to which Cuba is a party. It is working strenuously in the framework of this instrument to prepare a verification protocol which will supplement and strengthen it. In this context we envisage that States parties, in compliance with their obligations under the Convention, should assign the highest priority to ensuring individual safety and environmental protection and should, accordingly, collaborate with other States parties.

12. The use of new technologies for the qualitative modernization of weapons systems could transform them into more deadly means by vastly increasing their reach and accuracy. Technological processes could also lead to the development of new weapons based on the application of principles of modern physics, such as atomic particle beam weapons.

13. The conclusions of various scientific studies on the possible effects of nuclear war, including the climate changes subsumed under the term "nuclear winter", have lent a new dimension to the analysis of the global consequences of nuclear war. The international community has paid considerable attention to environmental pollution resulting from military and civilian nuclear activities and to the effects of such pollution.

14. For that reason, the work carried out by the relevant national and international organizations makes a valuable contribution to understanding the impact that such activities have on health and the environment.

15. There are more than 500,000 land- and sea-based nuclear warheads worldwide. On the technological level, new weapons research and development has continued unabated, with the emergence of more accurate nuclear ballistic missile systems and the deployment of highly accurate nuclear armed cruise missiles.

16. The studies that have been carried out have concentrated on possible climate changes due to the injection of dust into the atmosphere as a result of nuclear explosions. According to a study carried out several years ago by the United Nations, there is now conclusive scientific proof that a large-scale nuclear war would pose the danger of environmental disintegration throughout the world.

17. The aforesaid warnings, references and examples, together with the constant demand of the international community, highlight the importance of the observance of environmental norms in the preparation and implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements and reaffirm the responsibility of States to comply with the provisions of the treaties and conventions to which they are parties.

18. Cuba, mindful of the harmful impact on the environment of the use of nuclear weapons, regrets that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to establish a special committee on nuclear disarmament at its 1999 session, as requested in General Assembly resolution 53/77 X. For its part, Cuba reiterates its request to the Commission to establish at its next session, as a matter of priority, a special committee for the purpose of initiating negotiations on a gradual programme of nuclear disarmament aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

B. Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[12 June 2000]

19. Measures to implement international disarmament and arms control agreements are taken by the Russian side in strict conformity with the requirements of the Act of the Russian Federation on Protection of the Natural Environment. The general environmental safety requirements for weapons systems and components and military hardware are governed by special standard-setting documents that were prepared and enforced by the Ministry of Defence in 1999. This year, the Ministry of Defence plans to introduce a series of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 1400 environmental management standards. A major condition for carrying out disarmament measures is that technologies involving the use (including the destruction) of weapons and military hardware must undergo a State environmental expert study.

20. In keeping with the Russian Federation's obligations under the 1972 London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, the Russian Ministry of Defence has halted the dumping into the sea of radioactive waste and military hardware.

21. With a view to ensuring the Russian Federation's compliance with its obligations under the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete

the Ozone Layer, the Russian Ministry of Defence has elaborated a number of measures to ensure the use of weapons and military hardware with non-ozone-depleting substances.

22. Questions relating to compliance with environmental norms under obligations to carry out chemical weapons disarmament are governed by the Act of the Russian Federation on the Ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Act of the Russian Federation on the Destruction of Chemical Weapons. In this regard, the State body responsible for the federal target-oriented programme "Destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles in the Russian Federation" is carrying out preparatory measures to build facilities for destroying chemical weapons in seven regions and for storing them, bearing in mind the need for environmental safety during the destruction process. In the districts where each of these facilities is situated, four or five stationary posts and six to eight mobile environmental monitoring laboratories are to be constructed, and information from the posts and laboratories will be sent directly to the regional centres of the environmental monitoring system.

United Nations A/55/130

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2000
English
Original: English/Russian

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (v) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament: convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

General and complete disarmament: convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General**

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Replies received from Governments	2
	A. India	2
	B. Russian Federation	2

* A/55/150.

** The report contains replies from Member States and its preparation depends upon receipt of such replies.

00-53238 (E) 010800 020800

I. Introduction

1. On 1 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 U, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", paragraph 2 of which reads as follows:

> "*Requests* the Secretary-General to seek the views of States Members of the United Nations on the objectives, agenda and timing of the special session and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session".

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, on 14 March 2000, addressed a note verbale to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in chapter II below. Any other replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

A. India

[Original: English]
[11 May 2000]

3. India remains committed to the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament whose objectives and agenda will review and assess the implementation, as well as reaffirm, the principles and priorities of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament agreed to by consensus. India believes that the fourth special session, in order to be credible, should focus on the priority issue of nuclear disarmament and put forward a positive and future-oriented programme building on the achievements of the past. This would be possible by reaffirming the principles and priorities agreed to by consensus in the Final Document of the first special session with a view to preserving what has been achieved, evaluating where we stand at the beginning of a new millennium, and defining a programme of action to pursue the unfinished task in the future.

4. India was therefore disappointed that the deliberations of the 1999 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission did not achieve a consensus on the objectives and agenda of the fourth special session.

5. As for the timing of the fourth special session, India believes that in accordance with resolution 54/54 U, it would be meaningful and appropriate to convene the session following the emergence of a consensus on its agenda and objectives.

6. The call for the fourth special session was an Indian initiative at the ministerial meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cairo in 1994. Since then, India has consistently supported the resolutions of the Movement on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The meeting of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena, Colombia, in April 2000, reiterating the decision of their Heads of State/Government at the Summit of 1998 held at Durban, South Africa, conveyed their support for convening the fourth special session "to review and assess the implementation of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament while reaffirming its principles and priorities". India fully supports the proposal by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and will strive constructively for its realization.

B. Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[17 May 2000]

7. The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the enquiry by the Department for Disarmament Affairs of 14 March 2000 concerning the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, has the honour to inform him of the following.

8. From the point of view of the Russian Federation, the main work of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament could be to try to comprehend the aims of disarmament at the current stage of world development.

9. In the Russian Federation we are convinced that this forum should conclude with the adoption of important and long-term decisions designed to set the tone for disarmament at the beginning of the new millennium. Such results can be achieved only by

careful preparation of the special session and a calm and businesslike atmosphere during the session, free from sterile polemics and unconstructive and unrealistic approaches. Otherwise there is a danger that this important political event will prove to be as unsuccessful as the two previous special sessions on disarmament. The Russian Federation is prepared to work together with others with a view to establishing appropriate conditions for the holding of the fourth special session.

United Nations A/55/131

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2000
English
Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Fifty-fifth session
Item 74 (r) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament: follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*

Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*

Note by the Secretary-General

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Information received from Governments	2
	A. Cuba	2
	B. New Zealand	4
	C. Qatar	5

* A/55/150.

00-53231 (E) 250700 090800

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 54/54 Q of 1 December 1999, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", the General Assembly requested all States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they had taken on the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament, and requested the Secretary-General to apprise the Assembly of that information at its fifty-fifth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, information has been received thus far from Cuba, New Zealand and Qatar. Any additional information received from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Information received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[9 May 2000]

3. From a historical perspective, nuclear weapons are a new form of weapons that, owing to their multiple and far-reaching effects, have a destruction capacity without parallel in human experience. Nuclear technology makes it possible to release more energy in one microsecond, with one single nuclear weapon, than all the energy released by conventional weapons used in all the wars throughout history.

4. The special radiation of nuclear weapons has immediate and long-term effects, as dramatically demonstrated by the wealth of documents published on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks and the reliable proof that the witnesses themselves constitute of the horrors resulting from the use of nuclear weapons.

5. The international community has not been unheeding of these phenomena. It has expressed its views and voiced demands in innumerable forums and instruments that, in one way or another, set standards, lay down commitments and obligations, and contain appeals, including a request to the International Court of Justice for a pronouncement on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

6. On 8 July 1996, in what is regarded as a historic opinion, the International Court of Justice concluded that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

7. The opinion indicates that States have a legal obligation not only to hold such negotiations but also to bring them to a speedy conclusion. This unanimous opinion provides a clear basis for follow-up action on the part of the States Members of the United Nations, in their endeavour to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

8. The international community has already dealt with two types of weapons of mass destruction: biological and chemical weapons. Nuclear weapons are the most serious exception, despite having occupied a prominent place on the agenda of disarmament bodies for decades.

9. Countless General Assembly resolutions reaffirm the long-standing desire that the Conference on Disarmament should set up a subsidiary body to focus on the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. This is simply what is required of us under our international obligations. The interests of non-nuclear-weapon States cannot be left out of the nuclear disarmament process. Nuclear weapons are multilateral in their reach and impact, which means that we all have a right to keep calling for their elimination and the responsibility to work towards achieving that aim.

10. To pave the way towards that goal, in July 1996 Egypt proposed, on behalf of 28 delegations belonging to the Group of 21, including Cuba, a three-stage programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons to be completed by the year 2020. The Conference on Disarmament has repeatedly been called on to ensure that negotiations are taken up with a view to concluding a treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

11. In addition, in 1996 the Canberra Commission issued its report, setting out the views of eminent international personalities on the subject.

12. Only a reasonable and balanced international arms control and disarmament process can promote genuine peace, security and international stability. However, a number of countries are trying to limit and reduce the arms of other countries, under the guise of arms control and non-proliferation, although they are steadily arming themselves with the most advanced technology and military equipment, while ignoring the protests of civil society and the scientific community.

13. Nuclear disarmament is the highest priority on the disarmament agenda, as recognized at the first Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, held in 1978. This has also been recognized by the various international personalities who have held the office of Secretary-General of the United Nations, notably the current Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in an address to the Conference on Disarmament on 26 January 1999.

14. It must now be asked what role nuclear weapons are to play, following the cold war, and what their future role is to be in a collective security regime. What is the purpose of the nuclear weapons of countries that have decided to revive and strengthen the nuclear deterrence doctrine and at whom are these weapons directed?

15. In our view, these are simply manoeuvres designed to legitimize the possession and monopoly of nuclear weapons.

16. Cuba has been able to provide a timely and systematic response to all these questions and reaffirms its commitment to peace and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Cuba is expanding and diversifying the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, making every effort to derive from such energy the benefits that it can provide for people, animals, plants and the environment.

17. As a member of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, Cuba will continue to call for negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, which is the only guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons. In addition, it urges States to engage in ongoing negotiations to strengthen the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and to preserve its integrity and validity, which are threatened now. The ABM Treaty must continue to be the cornerstone of the maintenance of international strategic stability.

18. In keeping with the position it has taken in the General Assembly, Cuba once again emphasizes the importance of the advisory opinion given by the International Court of Justice and urges States to fulfil without delay their international obligation to take up multilateral negotiations leading to the speedy adoption of a convention on nuclear weapons prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, and transfer of nuclear weapons and the threat or use of such weapons, and calling for their elimination.

B. New Zealand

[Original: English]
[8 June 2000]

19. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has the honour to advise the Department for Disarmament Affairs that, on 23 February 2000 the New Zealand Parliament adopted a resolution on nuclear disarmament, resolving (in reliance on the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons) to appeal to all fellow Member States of the United Nations, and especially the nuclear weapon States, to join with New Zealand in fulfilling the obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. The text of the resolution appears below.[1]

The Parliament of New Zealand resolves, relying upon:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
- the final document of the first United Nations special session devoted to disarmament;
- the New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament and Arms Control Act 1987;
- the unanimous finding of the International Court of Justice and its advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons that,

  "there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control";
- the unanimous report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons;
- the (Eight) Foreign Ministers Joint Declaration 1998;
- and the Nuclear-Test-Ban Act 1999;

as a mark of the dawning of the year 2000, to appeal to all fellow Member States of the United Nations, and especially the nuclear weapons States, to join with New Zealand in fulfilling the obligation to pursue in good faith and bring

[1] The resolution was issued as a document of the Conference on Disarmament on 24 March 2000 (CD/1609).

to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control

and that the text of this resolution be conveyed by the Government to each and every Member State of the United Nations by the most effective diplomatic means available; and copies of the resolution be simultaneously communicated by the Government to the United Nations Secretary-General, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the President of the United Nations Security Council, the President of the Conference on Disarmament, and the President of the International Court of Justice; and that the Government of New Zealand work for the fulfilment of the obligation in all appropriate international forums.

C. Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[20 June 2000]

20. The State of Qatar is fully committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to which it is a party, and it makes a sustained effort to ensure that all parts of its own region will become zones free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, by participating in the negotiations held for that purpose in regional organizations such as the League of Arab States and others.

21. The armed forces of Qatar undoubtedly make a major effort for the prohibition of the use, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling and threat of use of nuclear weapons in accordance with instructions from the political leadership of the State. Since the State is hopeful that the entire international community will be free of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons, as previously stated, all the steps that have been taken have this orientation and our hopes are pinned on the achievement of the desired objective.